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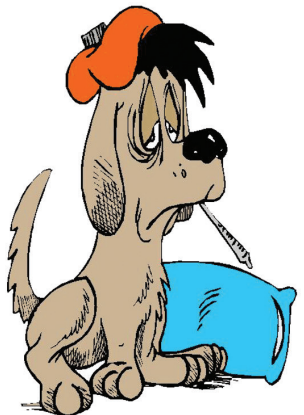
## INSIDE



### Married... Finally!

Elated and in some cases incredulous at making history, gays and lesbians by the dozens exchanged vows and were pronounced "partners for life" Monday as Massachusetts became the first state to let same-sex couples marry.

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### Finding the Words

A friend's mother dies, a co-worker's son gets injured in a car accident, a neighbor is diagnosed with a serious illness—sometimes it's hard for friends and family to find the right words to say in the face of such grief and tragedy. Here's how to go about it.

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### Sex and Asian Men

Hundreds of Asian American men are combating the enduring notion that they are sub-masculine. Many are offended that Asian men are projected as power players when it comes to intellectual intercourse but bystanders in the world of romance.

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# Gas prices go up—again

By SHAN SEMAN  
REPORTER

**M**obil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc. raised its gas prices by 5 cents a gallon yesterday—the sixth increase this year—bringing the total gallon price hike to 27 cents since the start of the year. Shell Marianas followed suit at midnight last night, raising its pump price by 7 cents a gallon—its fourth increase this year.

The increases nudged gas prices closer to the \$3-dollar mark, with Mobil's full-service rate for super gasoline hitting \$2.679 per gallon and Shell's super gasoline full-service rate at \$2.599 per gallon.

A statement by Mobil said their increase is a result of continued higher product costs of gasoline in the region.

"A combination of global and regional factors, which include increases in crude oil prices, freight cost increase, supply and increasing demand have impacted the cost of gasoline," said retail manager Bernadette Valencia of Mobil Oil Mariana Islands Inc. "The tight supply and crude oil prices remain high thus putting pressure on prices locally."

Valencia said the oil prices have reached a level not seen in over 13 years.

"A barrel of crude oil has reached over \$38 a barrel, the highest since October 1990 when prices were volatile after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait," she said.

Valencia, however, said that the company will continue to monitor product cost and pass on any savings it can to the consumers.

"We encourage our customers to keep their vehicles well maintained to help

See GAS on Page 8



## Oil prices surge, gas prices hit record

By BRUCE STANLEY  
AP BUSINESS WRITER

**LONDON (AP)**—Oil prices surged to near \$42 a barrel and the U.S. Energy Department said the country's average retail price of a gallon of gasoline had passed \$2 for the first time.

Oil prices rose Monday as markets shrugged off a Saudi proposal that OPEC raise its official output target by 6 percent.

Analysts argued that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries must add real barrels of oil to world supplies, rather than just increase the target, if it expects to curb the relentless rise in crude prices.

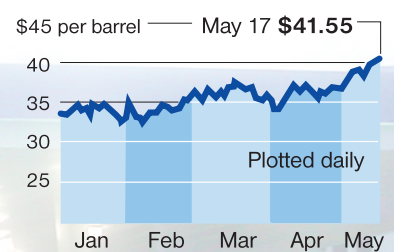
A senior OPEC delegate, speak-

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### Oil prices up

The price for June delivery of oil settled at \$41.55 per barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange on Monday.

### Near-month settlement prices for light, sweet crude oil



SOURCE: Moneyline Telerate

AP

## 'A fourth of CUC employees do not meet the educational requirements'

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

Some 87 personnel—or 25 percent—of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. workforce, including those in the management level, do not meet their positions' educational requirement.

At the same time, 42 employees are found to be "overpaid" as their

salary exceeds the maximum of their position's salary range.

Yet all these employees continue to get their salaries despite the CUC's implementation of a new compensation and reclassification policy at the utility corporation.

This was stressed yesterday by CUC board personnel committee members in response to concerns raised by Rep. Tim-

othy Villagomez over the alleged salary reduction of some CUC employees due to the implementation of the new policy.

Villagomez, a former CUC executive director himself, reportedly said that CUC employees were "upset over the lack of notice on the implementation of the new salary schedule contained in the study that has resulted in a decrease in

See A FOURTH on Page 8



### HEALTHY FOOD

Acting director of Division of Agriculture Ben Borja, seventh from left, strike a pose for a photo with senior citizens after 13 farmers on island donated fruits and vegetables worth about \$400 to the elders. The donation is part of the celebration of Mes Lancheros.

SHAN SEMAN

## DPS nears limit of its '04 budget

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO  
REPORTER

Based on current operational expenses, the police department is on the verge of exceeding its fiscal year 2004 allocation, prompting it to consider asking for a bailout measure from the administration and the Legislature.

The move is being compelled by the need to continue operations despite the insufficient funding allocation it has been receiving for several years now.

Of the problems facing the department, commissioner Edward Camacho said the shortage of operational patrol and traffic vehicles has been deterring police response activities.

"We are still putting out reports and other studies that would back us up when we ask the Legislature and the adminis-

See DPS on Page 8



Local

CUC: Old engines causing power outages

By LIBERTY DONES  
REPORTER

There is no power crisis in the Commonwealth but power outages occur due to old machines, according to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

“We just have old engines and some of them are up for rehabilitation and overhaul,” said CUC board chairman Herman P. Sablan in an interview yesterday.

House Committee on Public Utilities, Transportation, and Communications chair Timothy Villagomez had earlier asked CUC officials to shed light about “reports” that Commonwealth’s

power system is on the verge of a “meltdown.” The lawmaker, who is a former CUC executive director, had said that the matter must be addressed immediately as it affects businesses and potential investors in the Northern Marianas.

“The committee is very anxious to discuss the problems that are plaguing the power generation system. The information that we have received described the situation as a serious crisis. Some have even suggested that the power system is on the verge of a meltdown,” said Villagomez.

Meantime, a government source said that some quarters would use the “serious” power situation to push for the privati-

zation of CUC’s power plant. “They are shaping the public’s consciousness to see the need for privatization. This is an issue that is being advanced in the high level of government,” said the source, who agreed to speak on condition of anonymity.

The source further said that an interested investor has been seen dining out with some government officials.

CUC is currently fine-tuning its Request for Proposal for the privatization of its main power plant in Lower Base.

The utility firm has hired a private consultant, Harris Group, to do the project’s scope of work.

The CUC board approved the

proposed privatization of CUC’s power plants in July 2003.

At the same time, it voted for the issuance of an RFP for the privatization of Power Plant 2. The process was stalled, however, following findings that the CUC allegedly leaked information to a potential investor and that there was a lack of consultation prior to

the issuance of the RFP.

The CUC’s RFP, which was later looked at by the Harris Group, aimed to solicit competitive proposals from independent power producers to modernize, upgrade, operate, and transfer Power Plant 1 and 2 and build CUC’s administration building on Saipan.

CUC later said that the con-

struction of the building would be taken out.

The CUC earlier said the winning contractor would take over both plants and expand Power Plant 1. It is required to provide a state-of-the-art system control and data acquisition or SCADA for the existing machines at Power Plant 1 and the new installed unit.

Water task force gets OK for \$800K drilling rig

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO  
REPORTER

Gov. Juan N. Babauta inked yesterday a contract for the purchase of a water well drilling rig that would be used to remedy the water problem on Saipan.

Governor’s information officer Peter Callaghan disclosed that Babauta signed a \$835,911 contract to provide the CNMI Water Task Force with a water well drilling rig. The equipment would be used to help the team and the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. dig up exploratory wells on the island.

Callaghan said the task force would drill as many as 60 new wells on Saipan within the next two years to provide for about 2 million gallons of water per day.

One million gallons of that would be new groundwater that would be piped to the existing utility system. The development of exploratory wells into production wells was originally recommended by the U.S. Geological System.

“Some new sites will be developed in established well fields while others will be drilled in areas that have never been explored on Saipan,” said Callaghan.

The other 1 million gallons would replace a similar amount of poor quality water that is now coursing through the water system. This will be done by systematically abandoning poorly developed production wells that are either too salty or are not cost-effective to operate due to very low yield.

“As the poor quality wells are abandoned, the new and more efficient—and better quality—wells will be brought online to replace the old,” said Callaghan.

The need for the well drilling rig is particularly sharp at higher elevations where explorations would be done, since larger and more reliable equipment is needed to drill down to sea level where additional groundwater may be found.

According to Callaghan, it was Chuck Jordan who recommended the purchase of the new equipment, as the only available well drilling equipment in the CNMI would not accomplish the proposed work in an efficient manner.

Jordan, who is the governor’s adviser on Capital Improvement Projects, also said that the use of equipment that is smaller than what is actually needed often results in exploratory wells being aban-

doned because the equipment inside the hole could not be retrieved when it goes in too deep.

“This condition can hamper the entire well drilling program on Saipan while waiting for replacement drilling tools and drill pipe. This situation can prove futile if only to lose them [equipment] again and again,” Jordan added.

He stressed that the new drilling rig would accomplish the necessary work at higher elevations more efficiently in terms of time and cost savings.

Rotary Club bids Lizama goodbye

The Rotary Club of Saipan said goodbye yesterday to former Coastal Resource Management permit manager Becky Lizama, who is leaving the islands to pursue a law degree this August at the Lewis & Clark Northwestern School of Law in Oregon.

The former permit manager in return, acknowledged the trust and confidence she enjoyed during her four-year career with the government, particularly under the Babauta administration, which she claimed had given her leeway to do everything she wants to advance the CRM’s mandate.

“Definitely, I would be coming back after five years,” said Lizama during the Rotary Club’s weekly luncheon meeting at the Hyatt Regency Saipan yesterday.

Rotary Club president Jeff Schorr said Lizama has been an unofficial member of the club and has been helping with various community-related activities, including those sponsored by the organization.

Lizama, who is also the CNMI’s Point-of-Contact to the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force, has been actively promoting environmental awareness and the preservation of coral reefs in the CNMI.

She has already resigned from her government posts effective April 30.

The 29-year-old Lizama, who obtained a Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering from the Marquette University in Wisconsin, will be enrolling at the Oregon school sometime in August this year.

Before she joined the CRMO in May 2000, she had worked for a private engineering consulting firm in the CNMI. (Edith G. Alejandro)

verizon  
cmyk

hardt

# Express mail service to see improvements

On March 1, the U.S. Postal Service implemented new procedures for Express Mail service to the CNMI, Guam, the Freely Associated States and American Samoa. The new procedures called for the use of a different or custom designed label for Express Mail addressed to any of these locations. Unfortunately, most post offices in the U.S. mainland were not supplied with the labels and staff were not trained in its use. This essentially made Express Mail to the western Pacific unavailable. Many mainland companies who regularly ship to these locations via Express Mail were faced with the challenge of shipping via a slower USPS produce such as Priority Mail or switching to a more expensive private carrier.

Express Mail is the USPS' guaranteed overnight or 2nd day delivery option. Due to distance and the International Date Line, it is impossible to deliver Express Mail items to the western Pacific locations in the time guaranteed. After an Inspector General study determined that the USPS was losing money because shippers were requesting reimbursement, it discontinued its regular Express Mail service.

"If the problem was just that our mail needed a special label it would not have been a very big problem. Unfortunately the USPS is a very big organization and word had not spread to the staff behind the counters. My own staff were told that they could not send Express Mail at all to the CNMI."

"When this problem came to my attention, I immediately contacted the USPS and began a dialogue with them regarding this change," said CNMI Resident Rep. Pete A. Tenorio.

"After the USPS field tested their new procedures they came to agree with us that there was a larger problem. I met with them last Friday where they conveyed their new training plan and that they are updating their computer system."

"The ultimate goal is to have their rules changed allowing for a three day delivery option for our area of the country, this will unfortunately take over a year," said Tenorio.

Express Mail service from the CNMI or other affected areas to the U.S. mainland has not changed. Postal Service employees can still utilize the regular label.



**FUN RUN BENEFICIARY**  
The non-profit organization, The Library Friends, receives the proceeds collected from the 2004 Ayuda Fun Run, amounting to \$1,005. The Library Friends benefits the Joeten Kiyu Library. Every year, the Marianas Visitors Authority coordinates the Ayuda Fun Run and the proceeds are donated to a non-profit organization within the community. This year's event on Saipan attracted 67 members of the community.  
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

## Landowner sues MPLA, DPW for nonpayment

By **LIBERTY DONES**  
REPORTER

A landowner has sued the Marianas Public Lands Authority and the Department of Public Works for breach of agreements, misrepresentation of facts, and gross disregard of a major land acquisition for over a decade now.

Jose Ch. Camacho, through lawyer Robert Torres, said that in Dec. 1990, DPW executed a memorandum of understanding with him and his siblings for right-of-way acquisition of their lands in As Lito for public use: reconstruction of the As Lito road, installation of a drainage system, and installation of a new power distribution system.

Camacho's property includes three parcels of lands totaling 737 square meters.

In June 1991, then Gov. Larry DeLeon Guerrero issued a certification for land exchange for Camacho's property, justifying its acquisition as "an absolute necessity for public use."

The certification tasked the MPLA, at that time known as Marianas Public Land Corp., to pursue the land exchange with Camacho.

In April 1992, MPLC issued a formal compensation offer to Camacho at \$90 per square meter for a fee simple interest and an additional \$299,000 for severance damage.

Torres said that MPLC failed to tender performance and never paid his client. Instead, he said that in Jan. 1993, MPLA issued three letters to confirm and document the parties' mutual understanding and agreement about the proposed exchange.

MPLC, then headed by execu-

tive director William Concepcion, offered to exchange Camacho's property in As Lito with a set of property in the Obyan area.

Camacho agreed to the exchange plus a total compensation valuation of \$563,250.

Torres said that unknown to Camacho, however, MPLC leased the Obyan property to a business group in 1994. He said MPLC entered into an agreement with Pacific Resort Development Inc. and Haas and Haynie resorts for the use of "the very parcel that MPLC had unequivocally committed to Camacho."

"In utter disregard of the land exchange agreement, MPLC failed to tender the Obyan property," said Torres.

He said Camacho has heard nothing from MPLA nor has the government bothered to tender compensation, despite the government's taking and use of the property. This, he said, constitutes unconstitutional taking of property.

Torres noted that the 1992 monetary compensation offer of over \$563,00 by MPLC constitutes a contract to pay Camacho.

The Obyan land offer, he said, constitutes an agreement to exchange land, which is enforceable as to its terms.

Further, Torres said that the certification has never been reversed, modified, or withdrawn by the government.

He said the breach of the land compensation and land exchange agreements were "willful and intentional and were perpetrated in conscious disregard."

Torres said his client suffered compensatory, consequential, and incidental damages, including the loss of property.

In misrepresenting the truth about the Obyan property, Torres said that the government essentially engaged in "affirmative misconduct beyond mere negligence."

Camacho's property is being used right now as part of the paved secondary road serving local residents and as a road known as Chalan Monsignor Martinez, which is a major thoroughfare going to the airport, Koblerville, and other areas.

At the same time, the property is being used by other agencies for utility lines.

fhb  
cmyk

cars unlimited

pierre rest.





# Babauta creates National Guard task force

By **EDITH G. ALEJANDRO**  
REPORTER

In another move to get the support of the U.S. Congress for the creation of the CNMI's own

National Guard, Gov. Juan N. Babauta established yesterday a task force that would determine the viability of the Commonwealth having its own militia. Babauta appointed former



**HAFA ADAI!** CONTRIBUTED PHOTO  
Sgt. Whitney Lee Lizama Arkle poses inside the hangar of a U.S. military base. Arkle is currently serving an 18-month tour of duty in Afghanistan. For security reasons, her mailing address and email cannot be published but her family would be happy to forward best wishes and prayers from the community. Her parents are Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Arkle Jr., San Jose Village, Tinian.

## Man wanted by police

By **SHAN SEMAN**  
REPORTER

The Department of Public Safety is on the lookout for a 37-year-old man who is wanted on charges of disturbing the peace, assault and battery, and aggravated assault and battery. According to DPS public information officer Sgt. Thomas A. Blas Jr., the suspect, Agilino P. Elyeisar, is wanted pursuant to an arrest warrant issued by Judge David Wiseman. The incident reportedly happened on May 13, 2004. Police report indicated that Elyeisar allegedly assaulted a female at a Kagman I residence.

The victim sustained serious neck injuries and was admitted into the Commonwealth Health Center Intensive Care Unit. Due to ongoing investigation, the identity of the victim was not released. Criminal Investigation Bureau and COPPS in Kagman began looking for the suspect last Monday, visiting known locations, family members, and relatives, but have yet to find him. Blas said the suspect is considered armed and dangerous. He advised anyone with information about the suspect to call the CIB office at 664-9042/45, COPPS at 664-9132, or the NMI Crime Stoppers hotline at 234-7272.

## Five complete ukulele lessons

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela yesterday commended five students who successfully finished advanced ukulele lessons during an awards ceremony at Tudela's office in San Antonio. "This program is geared toward presenting an opportunity for the youth to experience and learn through extracurricular activities," said Tudela. "I believe in the youth and this program is one of the ways we can help them learn, keep busy, and away from the streets." Tudela provided 10 ukuleles for the lessons. He said the instruments were given to his office by the Council of Arts and Culture through a grant. The graduates were Ian Benavente, John James Labausa, Kodie Castro, Antonette Labausa, and Johny Aldan. All completed 15 hours of learning advance ukulele playing at the Mayor's Youth Learning Center in Chalan Kanoa. "It's good," said Castro. "It's an island instrument so it's fun.

I enjoy it and I will continue to try to learn more." The lessons were held everyday from May 4 to 17 between 3:30pm and 5pm. Felix Fitial handled the instruction. Fitial said the students learned various keys of the instrument. He led them during the award ceremony as they played and sang the CNMI National Anthem, "Home on Saipan," and a birthday song dedicated to Tudela, who celebrated his birthday last Monday. Tudela said he will continue the program as long as he is mayor. The mayor said his office will next head the Adult Basic Education program, which is expected to begin this summer. He said the Northern Marianas College has already agreed to provide an instructor for the program. He invited other youths to visit the youth center. "You can come in and read the paper or books, or draw. The center is free and lessons are free." *(Shan Seman)*

Supreme Court Associate Justice Edward Manibusan to chair the newly created National Guard Task Force, while members of the panel include Deputy Police Commissioner Franklin Babauta, Saipan JROTC head Tony Cabrera and another JROTC chief from Tinian. Governor's press officer Peter Callaghan said the task force was created to solidify the CNMI's bid to have its own National Guard after the U.S. House of Representatives junked the proposal last year. The task force would provide solid details and other relevant information necessary for the CNMI to get the approval of the U.S. Congress, Callaghan said. For its initial task, the team

would be holding a series of meetings with the Guam National Guard Adjutant to discuss the militia's composition, organization, and other pertinent matters. Also, the task force would submit a study on how the CNMI National Guard could be funded, whether the CNMI population base could support it, and how many senior and junior high school students would be participating and later move up to the U.S. military. "Once all these are prepared, the governor would be meeting with the Washington people, particularly the U.S. Congress, to ask for their support. Hopefully, the CNMI National Guard could be included in the U.S. fiscal year 2005 budget," said Callaghan.

The U.S. Congress is expected to discuss the fiscal year 2005 budget by August this year, and the CNMI is hoping that before the hearing, the administration would be able to incorporate the CNMI's proposal into the National Defense Appropriation. According to Callaghan, the CNMI is one of the last members of the United States family that has yet to have its own National Guard. Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and other commonwealths have their own National Guards in place. Based on reports, Guam is receiving \$32 million for its Guam National Guard. The CNMI is hopeful that, if approved, even half of the appropriations allotted to Guam

could be also be allocated to the Northern Marianas. In 2003, the U.S. House of Representatives junked the proposed creation of the CNMI National Guard due to the estimated \$275-million cost of setting up a unit in the CNMI. Another concern raised during the U.S. Congress deliberation was the CNMI's ability to form a National Guard unit given the size of its population. Babauta has been pushing for the CNMI's own National Guard unit to enhance local security and enable the Northern Marianas to respond quickly to emergency situations. The local Legislature has already passed a law, Public Law 13-32, authorizing the creation of the local militia unit.

cuc



# Opinion

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## EDITORIAL

### Lucky you, reading this

This could be your lucky day, if you're alert and optimistic while reading this editorial. Lucky for us that Richard Wiseman, a psychology professor at Britain's University of Hertfordshire, is running a massive study of luck. Luckily, he's discovered some fascinating things. People born in May—wait, that's this month!—are the luckiest of all people. At least they see themselves that way. And those losers born in October see themselves as the unluckiest.

Wiseman, who split the difference and was born in September, strongly suspects now that the element of pure chance has much less to do with good or bad luck in later life than people's birth season—and the parents' matching mental attitudes, communicated to their infant in the first few months of life. If confirmed in further study, this will be an unpopular concept in the United States, where, as luck would have it, blaming luck on mental attitudes means you're largely responsible for your own luck, either way. So much for blaming bosses, enemies, spouses, government, et al.

Through his research website—[www.luckfactor.co.uk](http://www.luckfactor.co.uk)—Wiseman has so far surveyed more than 40,000 people on their birth dates and self-perceived luck. The psychologist, who has superb luck in getting on British TV and talking about luck, theorizes that humanity's innate optimism over the warmth, promise and sunshine of spring is somehow communicated by parents to April, May and June newborns as a positive attitude. And the impending gloom of mid-autumn, auguring gray skies, colder temperatures and looming holiday visits by too many relatives, also gets downloaded onto new babies' vacant hard drives.

Remember that childhood coach who kept saying, "You make your own luck"? The coach may have been correct again. An October-born man could walk through a parking lot so depressed over bad luck at work that he misses the \$20 bill blowing by his feet. His May-born wife following behind spots the money and celebrates her latest good luck, actually determined years before. The husband silently supplements his mental list of bad-luck incidents.

Wiseman has tips for finding good luck: Relaxed luckies notice and act on good-luck chances. Lucky people listen to intuition, rather than blame it. Luckies are certain that good fortune is coming, so they see it; unluckies believe bad luck always finds them, so it does. Even when lucky people experience misfortunes, they turn a minus into a plus, imagining how much worse it could have been. Same goes for the lucky ones reading so far down this page.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



## Are we safe yet?

By **ALAN B. KRUEGER AND DAVID LAITIN**  
Special to The Washington Post

Are we winning the war on terrorism? Although keeping score is difficult, the State Department's annual report on international terrorism, released last month, provides the best government data to answer this question. The short answer is "No," but that's not the spin the administration is putting on it.

"You will find in these pages clear evidence that we are prevailing in the fight," said Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage. As evidence, the "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report says that worldwide terrorism dropped by 45 percent between 2001 and 2003. The report even boasts that the number of terrorist acts committed last year "represents the lowest annual total of international terrorist attacks since 1969."

Yet, a careful review of the report and underlying data supports the opposite conclusion: The number of significant terrorist acts increased from 124 in 2001 to 169 in 2003—36 percent—even using the State Department's official standards. The data that the report highlights are ill-defined and subject to manipulation—and give disproportionate weight to the least important terrorist acts. The only verifiable information in the annual reports indicates that the number of terrorist events has risen each year since 2001, and in 2003 reached its highest level in more than 20 years.

To be sure, counting terrorist acts is not as straightforward as counting the number of SARS victims. Specialists have not agreed to any test that would unambiguously qualify an act as one of international terrorism. But in the words of the Congressional Research Service, the State Department's annual report is "the most authoritative unclassified U.S. government document that assesses terrorist attacks."

So how did the report conclude that international terrorism is declining?

It accomplishes this sleight of hand by combining significant and nonsignificant acts of terrorism. Significant acts are clearly defined and each event is listed in an appendix, so readers can verify the data. By contrast, no explanation is given for how nonsignificant acts are identified or whether a consistent process is used over time—and no list is provided describing each event. The data cannot be verified.

International terrorism is defined in the report as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets" involving citizens or property from multiple countries,

"usually intended to influence an audience." An event "is judged significant if it results in loss of life or serious injury to persons" or "major property damage."

A panel determines whether an event meets this definition, but the State Department refused to tell us the members of the panel or the practices used to count nonsignificant terrorist acts.

We do know that the definition leaves much room for discretion. Because "significant events" include such things as destroying an ATM in Greece or throwing a molotov cocktail at a McDonald's in Norway without causing much damage, it is easy to imagine that nonsignificant events are counted with a squishy definition that can be manipulated to alter the trend.

The alleged decline in terrorism in 2003 was entirely a result of a decline in nonsignificant events.

Another curious feature of the latest report is that its catalog of events does not list a single significant terrorist act occurring after Nov. 11, 2003, despite averaging 16 such acts a month in the rest of the year.

The representation that no terrorist events occurred after Nov. 11 is patently false. The bombings of the HSBC Bank, British Consulate, and Beth Israel and Neve Shalom synagogues in Istanbul by individuals associated with al-Qaida occurred on Nov. 20 and Nov. 15, respectively. Additionally, the report mentions the bombing of the Catholic Relief Services in Nasiriyah, Iraq, on Nov. 12 but somehow omits it from the official list of significant events.

So the record number of 169 significant international terrorist events for 2003 is undoubtedly an understatement. It is impossible to know if these and other terrorist events were left out of the State Department's total of events.

Despite the lack of transparency and the rose-colored graphs, the department's data reveal that administration policies in the past year have not turned the terrorist tide. Of course, it is impossible to know how many terrorist acts would have occurred absent the war on terrorism, but it is unambiguous that the number of significant international terrorist acts is on the rise.

The fact that the number of nonsignificant terrorist acts has headed down—even if true—is, well, nonsignificant. What matters for security is the number of significant acts. It is regrettable that one casualty in the war against terrorism has been the accurate reporting of statistics. This seems to be another fight we are losing.

*Alan B. Krueger is the Bendheim professor of economics at Princeton University. David Laitin is the Watkins professor of political science at Stanford University.*



**Letters to the Editor**  
*Saipan Tribune welcomes contributions. All letters intended for publication must include the writer's name, address and, if possible, fax or telephone number. Letters are edited for space, clarity and fairness.*

# Patience is a virtue...?

Calculating and experienced individuals use patience to reach their ultimate goals. However, it was not the case for an organization of guest workers when it appears to be jumping the gun or is defeating its purpose.

After submitting their concerns on the much-touted House Bill 14-142, text messages were spread around urging Filipinos to boycott all of Rep. Ray Yumul's businesses. The organization may not be responsible for the text messages targeting Yumul's father's businesses but how could anyone not suspect that the organization had a part in it?

The group submitted an MOU acknowledged by their Department of Labor officials and by former DOLI Secretary and former Governor. I wonder why the President of the Philippines' signature was not on the MOU. This same MOU did not have Dr. Jack Tenorio and Governor Juan N. Babauta's signatures. If there was an amended or revised MOU between the two governments, the MOU should have the acknowledgment of the current officials in office.

Those responsible in their attempts to damage the Yumul's businesses are forgetting that Yumul does not own the Nonresident Workers Act of 2004. This bill is the exclusive property of the 14th CNMI Legislature and Rep. Yumul as the chairman of the Commerce and Tourism Committee had to do it, plain and simple.

The CNMI government is in dire need of an amended, revised or new nonresident workers law that would establish control over businesses that are prone to abusing their employees. How could the CNMI government address with dignity foreign workers concerns without a comprehensive labor law? And speaking of law, what progress has the Philippines Consulate made in investigating the arrest of four Chamorro men in the Philippines?

If the text messages were for other personal reasons, please settle it elsewhere. I ask that you don't further embarrass my congressman because you are only infuriating the people of the CNMI. Instead, think of the remaining thousands and thousands of Filipino workers who are working to support their families.

Come on fellas! Ray needs legal assistance and your support. Thank God that I am not an attorney or a member of the Legislature because I would have done more!

**Gonzalo Q. Santos**  
Capitol Hill

# No basis for comparison

I don't know how deliberate it was that an opinion column advocating bombing the terrorists into submission and thus achieving total victory, rather than leaving it to the United Nations, or trying to win the hearts and minds of unlike-minded peoples (*Victory should be the only goal* by Bruce Herschensohn) was placed next to this past week's "On My Mind" in Sunday's issue—in which I advocated just the opposite.

While that's what opinion pages are for—and it was an interesting juxtaposition, I would like to note that Herschensohn's comparison to World War II doesn't hold up. The people responsible for today's terrorist acts do not owe allegiance to a single political entity, they do not inhabit a single contiguous area, they are not a unified organized entity. They are far too dispersed. There is no one person one could capture, no one city one could drop an A-bomb on (God forbid!), no one geographic area the U.S. could either bomb or take control over, that would cause the terrorists to stop.

Massive military strength just can't—and won't—do the trick this time.

**Ruth L. Tighe**  
Tanapag, Saipan

# Hello from Iraq

I would like to say hello to the people of Saipan. My name is 1Lt. Alejandro M. Buniag. I am with the 411th Engineer Combat Battalion (Heavy) of the U.S. Army in Iraq. I miss my home island a lot. I would just like to say hello to all my friends and family and thank them for their support. Currently, my unit is tasked for the reconstruction of Iraq. My unit has various missions ranging from road repair, building construction, force protection, convoy operations, and combat patrols. Mortars, suicide bombers, improvised explosive devices, small arms fire are an everyday thing. But I hope to come back safe to my home island, Saipan.

**1LT Alejandro M. Buniag**  
Camp Victory North, Iraq

# Having a wonderful time; can't tell you everything

By **HANNA INGBER**  
Special to The Hartford Courant

I am not allowed to tell you about the political situation in Myanmar because I am still living here and do not want to be kicked out.

Sometimes I do. When I am preparing dinner and the electricity in my downtown apartment in Yangon goes out for the fourth time that day, I feel ready to leave.

When I write my weekly column for the *Myanmar Times*, the largest weekly newspaper in Myanmar and where I have worked for the past eight months, I crave the freedom of the press I took for granted in the United States. (During my first month here, the censor said to me: "We encourage freedom of expression. You can think whatever you want—just keep it in your head.") When I wrote about an adorable little street child with long dark hair and beautiful black eyes who greets me on my walk home from work, the censor rejected it because "We do not want to give off that image." I was so disappointed I wanted to quit.

I'm ready to throw in the towel when our front page shows a huge picture of Prime Minister Khin Nyunt and an article quoting his speech: "The false perception that Myanmar is crumbling and that its people are downtrodden has been created by those who wish us ill." We are not allowed to challenge or analyze his statements.

Or when a rat runs under my desk and I scream while my Myanmar colleagues break into laughter.

I am ready to come home when I talk to my parents on the phone but have to watch what I say because there is a good chance "they" are listening.

But overall, I enjoy my time here. As many expatriates say, "Life is good." Myanmar is one of the least-developed nations in the world, yet for the foreigners, we do OK.

I make about \$900 a month, but I live in a beautiful, newly renovated apartment in the heart of the city. I don't have a cellphone (because they cost about \$2,000 and you have to know someone very important), but I can afford a housekeeper five times a week. She is paid about \$60 a month, a salary that is considered extravagant. Some reporters, who have worked at the *Myanmar Times* for

more than a year, earn \$60. They cannot save, but most do not quit because it is the best salary they are likely to find.

Life for foreigners is good because no one messes with us. I can walk home from a bar in the middle of the night and not worry about being mugged. It does not look good for a foreigner to be victimized—therefore, rumor has it, the penalties are steep.

I don't want to leave because life here is fascinating. Everything operates differently.

At night I buy my vegetables from women with thanakha (a cream used to protect the skin) decorated cheeks who sit on the sidewalk with their produce, a little metal scale and a candle. They recognize me, one of the few foreigners, and call me by my Myanmar name Thet Thet. I squat on the ground and select the best tomatoes. The young woman smiles at me as she puts my tomatoes into a plastic bag and weighs them. Then she points to some weird green leaf, asking me to buy it. "Ma kyai bu," (I don't like) I say. She laughs and shouts, "Ma kyai bu!" to the women sitting around her, who all laugh too.

The newspaper's translators are men in their 60s who wear the traditional longyi (a patterned fabric that is tied in the front and looks like a skirt) and speak English well because they were educated under the British colonial system. They ask me to accompany them for their daily tea break. In the United States, I was on a carb-free diet. Here I eat rice and beans for breakfast, rice and soup for lunch, rice and curry for dinner.

Strangers see me on the street and stare at my white skin. (I often have to say "ga yu sai ba!" (be careful) because they forget to watch for oncoming traffic.) They shout at me, "Hello! Hello! Where you go?" or "Chit ze a leh" (What a cutie).

Living in Myanmar, a predominantly Buddhist country that harbors tremendous resentment against its Muslim minority and is run by a military dictatorship, is the biggest culture shock of my life. And as a fellow foreigner told me during my first week here, "The longer you stay, the more confused you become."

Let's just hope "they" let me stay. You can never really be sure.

*Ingber, 22, is a weekly columnist for the Myanmar Times in Rangoon.*

# Extra! Read nothing about it

By **WILLIAM POWERS**  
Special to the Los Angeles Times

"I've stopped reading the newspapers," Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld said Thursday in Baghdad, Iraq, to a gathering of soldiers, who broke out in rousing applause.

It was a joke. Or was it? After all, this is not exactly an administration of news junkies. The president himself admitted last year he "rarely" reads news stories, relying instead on the more "objective sources" on his staff to tell him what's happening in the world. (Truth be told, White House staffers often outshine real journalists. That story they did about the African uranium was unforgettable, like a great novel.)

Here's another reason I thought it might be a joke. Just a few weeks ago, Rumsfeld told a meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors that America's leaders must be "challenged, internally through the complex constitutional system of checks and balances, and externally by a free and energetic press." He also said our political system "needs information to be self-correcting."

But that was before all this horrible news starting breaking, and reading the paper became so, well, unpleasant. The first lady said this week she "can't bear" to look at the torture photos in the papers.

One can imagine even a man of Rumsfeld's sturdy temperament being unable to stomach what's on the front pages. It's gruesome stuff, real depravity. To immerse yourself in that every day can be downright depressing. And a Defense secretary has to keep his spirits high! No wonder those soldiers cheered. A democracy may need newspapers, but that doesn't mean anyone has to actually read them.

Still, the Pentagon chief needs a sense of the news, just in case it comes up in one of those endless Senate hearings they're always making him attend lately.

I propose we put together an executive summary of what's in the newspapers each day, specifically tailored to Rumsfeld's professional needs. In fact, today's "alpha" edition of the Daily Rummy is just out for his reading enjoyment.

Front Page: The only news that matters is the weather: "fair and breezy" in Washington. Summary: Iraq prison scandal could blow away by the weekend, as a "free and energetic press" loses steam and moves on to the Next Big Thing. Fingers crossed for a new Michael Jackson bombshell.

Politics: Kerry narrowing VP choices. Summary: Ridiculous future SecDef chatter gone, finito. And no mention of McCain—yes!

Metro: Local schools getting ready for graduation. Summary: Just as in Iraq, where schools are open, roads are being rebuilt, democracy is blossoming and many, many other good things are being ignored by this excessively negative journalistic establishment that secretly doesn't want the truth to prevail.

Business: Wall Street mixed, but recovery appears on track. Summary: The Iraq mission isn't hurting the economy at all. Heck, the war might even deserve a little credit for stimulating this bounce-back, but nobody ever mentions that. Talk about ungrateful.

Media: Air America, new liberal radio network, floundering. Summary: Further proof there's absolutely no constituency for the leftist antiwar message. Besides, who listens to radio any more? It's old hat, just like the newspapers. TV is where the action is, and really, who's better on Russert than a certain strong-jawed, unflappable Cabinet member?

Sports: Millions watch NBA Playoffs on TV. Summary: May mean smaller audiences for newscasts, where some are taking this challenging-the-leadership idea to shameless extremes.

Comics: Beetle Bailey has a couple of good old-fashioned soldiers engaging in wholesome G-rated pranks where nobody gets hurt or humiliated—no naked pyramids or leashes. Summary: Those were the days.

Editorial Page: Defense secretary mentioned seven times, but not once in context of resignation. Summary: Mission accomplished.

Classified: Numerous help-wanted listings, perhaps a result of the recovering economy. One seeks individual "with major leadership experience on a global scale," to take over a large multinational corporation. Promises seven-figure salary with benefits. Summary: Clip and save.

*William Powers is the media critic for the National Journal.*

# Saipan Tribune

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# Grant eyed for a joint NMI-Guam training site for Beijing Olympics

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO  
REPORTER

The Office of the Insular Affairs has reportedly agreed to release some \$3,000 to pay for a study that would look at how Guam and CNMI can position themselves as training areas for the upcoming 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, according to public information officer Peter Callaghan.

He said Gov. Juan N. Babauta will sign today the grant papers for a feasibility study on how the Northern Marianas and Guam could be marketed as a training areas for the Olympians.

Callaghan said the money would be used to determine whether both the CNMI and

Guam have sufficient facilities and whether an upgrade is necessary to lure participants in the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics to come to the two islands to train before the actual game begin.

"The study would help the OIA to determine if Guam and CNMI can be used for the training, whether we have sufficient sports facilities and if an upgrade is necessary. That would help us determine if we need improvements also," said Callaghan.

If the CNMI and Guam's facilities are found sufficient, the two islands would benefit from the influx of tourists and participants who would be staying on the islands for several weeks to train.

The athletes could also enjoy the tropical climate that is a benefit for round-the-clock training and preparation.

The International Olympic Committee selected Beijing in July 2001 to host the 2008 Olympic Games. As host, the city of Beijing is expected to benefit considerably from the massive investment spending in the pipeline and the numerous job opportunities it will create.

The Beijing municipal government has already announced an ambitious plan to spend \$20 billion in the next seven years to modernize the city's infrastructure. This translates into an average annual spending of about \$3

billion, which is equivalent to 10 percent of the city's GDP in 2000. The sum will be spent on developing sports facilities, public transportation, and communication networks. Apart from the infrastructure spending, a further \$12 billion will be ploughed into environmental protection projects.

The hosting of the sporting event will also expose China to greater international scrutiny and foster better understanding about the country. Through engaging China closer with the wider world, the Olympic Games will help strengthen the forces of liberalism in the country and hasten the pace of social, if not political, change.

## GAS

From Page 1

improve fuel efficiency," she said.

Saipan Tribune tried to reach Jeff Boyer, Shell Marianas retail area manager, yesterday but he was unavailable.

In an interview last night, however, John Valencia of Shell Marianas gas station in Puerto Rico affirmed that the com-

pany will raise rates effective midnight early this morning. This will put Shell's total gallon price adjustment at 24 cents for this year alone.

Mobil first increased pump prices by four cents a gallon in January, before increasing them again by 3 cents a gallon, matching Shell gas stations' pump price adjustment of 7 cents per gallon.

Mobil later declared three 5-cent increases beginning March

11. Another 5-cent increase was declared last April 19. The most recent 5-cent hike became effective after midnight yesterday.

Shell's gas stations on Saipan first increased rates this year by 7 cents a gallon, followed by two rounds of 5 cents a gallon, and yesterday's 7-cents increase.

Prices at Mobil stations on the island are now pegged at \$2.589 per gallon for full-service regu-

lar gasoline and \$2.379 for self-service of this gasoline per gallon. Self-service super gasoline is retailed at \$2.479 per gallon.

Shell stations' retail rate for full-service regular gasoline is \$2.499 per gallon. Its self-service super gasoline rate is \$2.499 per gallon while self-service regular gasoline rate is \$2.399 per gallon. Shell's diesel rate also jumped by 5 cents from \$2.429 to \$2.479 per gallon.

## OIL

From Page 1

ing on condition of anonymity, said the group was so worried about overheated prices that it might consider making a larger increase in its target than Saudi Arabia initially suggested last week.

OPEC, which supplies one-third of the world's oil, plans emergency talks this weekend in Amsterdam to discuss a

possible target increase of 1.5 million barrels. Because OPEC already exceeds its current target by more than this amount, analysts say such a move would only legitimize some of OPEC's overproduction and do nothing to trim prices.

"It's not that it won't be enough. It's irrelevant," said Leo Drollas, chief economist of the Center for Global Energy Studies in London.

Futures contracts of U.S. light

crude for June delivery reached \$41.85 a barrel in New York, before retreating to \$41.55, up 17 cents from Friday's close. It was a new record close on the New York Mercantile Exchange. In London, July contracts of North Sea Brent reached \$38.50 a barrel on the International Petroleum Exchange, but were up just 4 cents by evening at \$37.90.

In its weekly report of retail gasoline prices, issued Monday, the Energy Department said

Americans paid an average price of \$2.017 per gallon, up 7.6 cents from the previous week. That was the first time the national average topped \$2, the agency said.

Pressure is building on OPEC to dip into some of its spare production capacity to boost actual output—not just its target. Markets are stretched by unexpectedly strong demand and spooked by turmoil in Iraq and uncertainty elsewhere in the oil-rich Middle East.

## DPS

From Page 1

tration to help us. We are asking them to bail us out—all three islands—if we go beyond the 2004 budget. It seems like if we stay at our current expenses right now, we would go beyond it. We are putting our reports together to justify our request," said Camacho.

Presently, the DPS-Traffic Division has only four operating traffic vehicles that could be used for emergency and

patrol operations. Ideally, the DPS needs 24 traffic and patrol vehicles to operate the 24-hour, three-shift operations.

However, Camacho pointed out, all other cars are in the auto shop for repairs and the DPS has insufficient funding to take the cars out. "Some of the cars are in there for the last three to four months. We are under budget for several years now and allocations for maintenance are being used for operational purposes," said the official.

If funding is made available, though, Camacho said that, instead of taking the vehicles out of the shop, the department is seriously considering buying new patrol vehicles since the amount involved is almost the same.

"Looking at the numbers, we might as well buy 20 new cars than get these cars out of the shop. It would be the same, the total cost of the repairs and the new vehicles," said Camacho.

Besides asking for additional funding or possibly a bailout measure from the administration and the Legislature, Ca-

macho said several steps are currently being done to remedy the shortage of patrol vehicles.

Camacho said he has waived the 75,000 miles requirement to allow patrol officers more time to use the vehicles. "We are assessing all the vehicles and see if we can use them. Because right now, one car would be taken to the shop and another would be out. We only have between four to five patrol cars operating right now," he added.

Camacho said the department is trying to rectify the problem by enforcing a maintenance preventive check on all vehicles. The Motor Vehicle Condition Report, an assessment made daily, is being done to ensure that all patrol vehicles are in top-notch condition.

Also, the commissioner had ordered that all DPS unmarked vehicles be used for other patrol purposes and operations to maximize the use of police vehicles in light of the shortage.

He said the vehicle shortage has hampered the DPS' response operations, patrol and visibility. "We are truly not out

there for deterrence and we know that a lot of drivers are violating several traffic laws, there are reports of non-use of seat belts [and] speeding but we are not out there to make an arrest," he said.

Camacho earlier said the DPS Patrol Section currently has 12 operational vehicles, while the Traffic Division operates with seven units. He said the DPS need a total of 14 units for Traffic and 24 for Patrol to continuously monitor the island.

Camacho said his department requested \$32 million for fiscal year 2005. In fiscal year 2004, DPS received \$13 million. It had asked for \$30 million.

In 2000, Patrol car operations was also be affected after the budget for car leases was cut from \$1.1 million to just over \$800,000. The Office of Budget and Management had also drastically reduced the department's budget for fuel to \$18,000 for FY 2000 from the current appropriation of \$147,000. DPS uses about \$13,000 worth of fuel every month.

## A FOURTH

From Page 1

their [pay]."

Villagomez said CUC board members and the executive director should hold a series of meetings with the entire CUC workforce to explain the justification for the compensation study and the reason for implementing the salary schedule.

"He is misinformed," said board personnel committee chair Velma Ann Palacios in an interview yesterday.

Palacios, members Joseph Torres and Rufina Miles noted that it was the board's position from the very beginning that no salary reduction would be made, although some employees are receiving salaries beyond the maximum range.

Further, the committee members noted that the new policy originated from the CUC management, which had pushed for an even earlier date of implementation.

They cited that the board approved the new policy on Jan. 16, 2004. The management, they said, wanted to implement it after 30 days, but the board favored a longer time, which was April 4 "to allow ample time for consultation and preparation."

"We were the ones who said, 'Provide a longer period for the transition.' You see, the management has been working on this study for over a year now [with a private consultant]. The management provided all comments in the study. And this gives us now the framework on how to go about our personnel's compensation and classification, a matter that should have been fixed years ago. In fact, it was his [Villagomez] time when this personnel issue came out," Torres said.

"The thing here is that employees are getting paid the same amount, although some of them do not qualify," Miles said.

CUC board chairman Herman P. Sablan said Villagomez should have consulted with CUC first before issuing "incorrect statements."

The board's personnel committee said that CUC needs the plan to ensure a fair and just compensation and reclassification process.

The study was conducted for CUC by Fox Lawson. It provides a salary range for all positions at CUC and was designed after a survey of other utility agencies in the region and the mainland U.S.

The committee said the study has shown that many employees were highly compensated, while others were below the required compensation.

"Previously a person was hired and the compensation did not match the person's qualifications. We all know that there's a disparity be-

tween the salary ranges of management and the rank and file as pointed out by the Office of the Public Auditor early on. It's not a perfect plan but it's a start to provide fairness and consistency in the hiring practices of CUC," the committee said.

Palacios said CUC's compensation now "is not based on whom you know but whether or not you meet the qualifications that the position is requiring."

Based on the study, 123 employees out of the 350 filled FTEs at CUC are below their position's salary range. These employees received a salary increase effective April 4.

The study found that 90 employees are within their position's salary range so their salary remained the same

The salaries of 137 employees, however, have been frozen because they are either compensated above their range or they do not meet the educational requirements for their positions.

CUC said that of the 137, 42 have met the requirements of the positions but they are overpaid; eight employees have met the educational requirements but do not meet the positions' required experience; 87 do not meet the position's educational requirement.

Of the 87 personnel, 27, including deputy director Bernard Villagomez and some other managers, need to obtain a bachelors' degree; 30 require an associate degree; and 30 require a high school diploma.

CUC said 24 employees who do not meet the education requirement are at the management level; 26 are at the professional level (assistant managers, section supervisors, accountants, lab specialists); and 41 employees are at the support staff level.

Of the 87 employees who do not meet their positions' educational requirements, 81 have met the required experience and six do not meet the required experience.

Palacios said the personnel committee is working with the management to recommend to the board on how to address the education issue. She said that one option being looked at is to give the employees a certain time to acquire the educational requirement while working at CUC.

In fact, she said that CUC is currently allowing those who do not have high school diplomas to take up classes, with CUC paying for their books.

"We are looking at ways to help the existing employees meet the qualifications. No one is being grandfathered from the position requirements. But for new employees, we expect the management to hire the most qualified individuals for the positions," she said.

holy spirit ad





microl  
+red







# Business

pss menu

daiichi spa  
+p287 (blue)



# Island Snapshots



**SISTER SCHOOLS**  
Students from Marianas High School and Seisa Gakuen High School of Japan pose during activities held as a part of the 18th Annual Cultural Exchange Program.

BRAD RUSZALA



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

**GUAM TRIP**  
Donna Leong-Aguon's third and fourth grade students and Debra Whitt's fifth and sixth grade students of the NMC Laboratory School went to Guam last week. While there, they were treated to breakfast and lunch by governors Juan N. Babauta of the CNMI and Felix Camacho of Guam. Additionally, the students went to UnderWater World and the planetarium at the University of Guam. In picture are Rich Puhalla, CLS Principal, Mrs. Camacho, Governor Camacho, Governor Babauta, and the students, teachers and chaperones from the Lab School.



LIBERTY DONES

**FAREWELLS**  
Board of Education vice chairman Dino Jones, center, and wife Letty pose with former Northern Marianas College vice president Chas Algaier during Sunday's Miyazawa Gakuen School-Marianas High School farewell party at World Resort Hotel. Algaier resigned from the college effective yesterday.

## BUILDING FROM SCRATCH

LeRoy Kani, left, and Jake Liwanag work on the second level of the Marianas High School's Senior Class Utt built without the aid of manmade items.



BRAD RUSZALA



BRAD RUSZALA

**TRASH WARRIORS**  
Pitching in to help the Lt. Governor's roadside clean-up program are, from left, Olive Aninon, Manny Laniyo, Christie Lazaro and Pina Magofna from the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.

shell

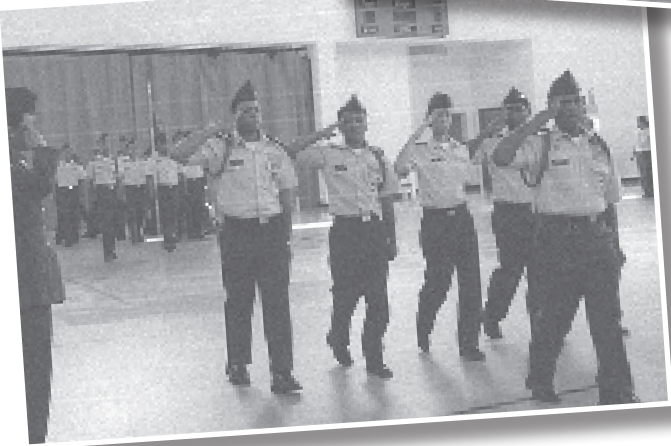




CHANGE OF  
COMMAND

The Marianas High School's Dolphin Battalion recently changed command. Here, MHS principal James Denight is shown presiding over the relinquishing of the Dolphin Battalion Command from cadet Lt. Col. Charlotte Kenty to the incoming commander, cadet Lt. Col. Normaine Pangelinan. Other pictures show the battalion doing marching formations as part of the ceremony.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



THANK YOU

Gov. Juan N. Babauta presents a plaque of appreciation to Yashu Miyazawa, president and founder of Miyazawa Gakuen School, right, during a farewell ceremony Sunday evening at the World Resort Hotel. The CNMI and Seisa Gakuen celebrate their 18th year of their sister-school relationship.

LIBERTY DONES

TARGET SHOOTING

First in line is Company Commander Capt Franklin R. Babauta of the 100th Battalion, 442d Infantry, Company E, at the Guam Military Base. Here, he is shown shooting with an M4 rifle using M40 Protective Mask for annual qualification. The Company E is composed of Guam, Saipan, Rota, and Tinian reservists.

SGT FABIAN M. INDALECIO



ctai

staywell  
+blue



shell







# World

kambara





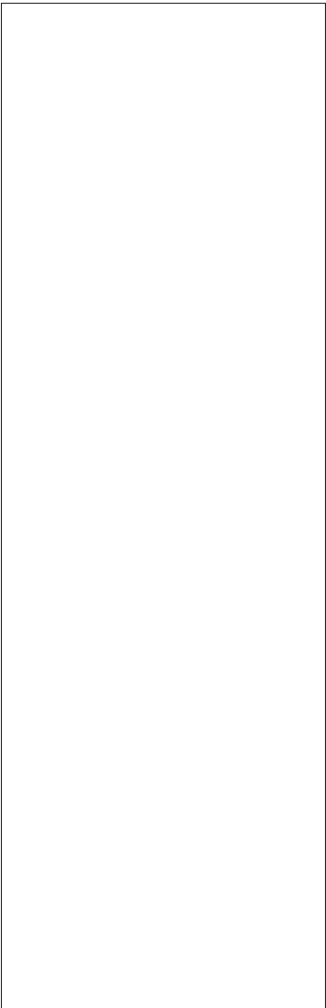
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# Campus Life

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# Life & Style



# Fans drawn to Trias' island charm

**HONOLULU (AP)**—A sweet-heart, yes. A star, maybe. But don't call Jasmine Trias a diva. The Hawaii teenager's sweet voice and endearing personality have helped her reach the top three in the hit TV singing competition "American Idol."

It's a perch one might expect to transform a girl. But those who know the 17-year-old island native say she remains as humble as ever—which still gives her a chance against two rivals with more powerful voices.

"She's not arrogant. She's not showy," said Betsy Gunderson, principal of Maryknoll School, where Trias, a senior honors student, is due to graduate June 4. "I think that's why she has such tremendous support."

Few deny she has the good looks of a pop star, but her string of victories has surprised many "Idol" observers as other perceived front-runners were sent home. The most shocking moment came last week when Trias managed to survive after a disco performance that yielded the toughest criticism of the night from judges.



Trias

Trias was reduced to tears - but it was La Toya London, a critical favorite, who was voted off instead, prompting judge Randy Jackson to label the vote

At Maryknoll, where students watch the "American Idol" results each Wednesday night, classmates describe an easygoing, extraordinarily friendly girl whose popularity transcended cliques. They say she doesn't fit into the stereotypical mold of fame.

"When you think of celebrities, you think of egotistical people," said Brian Klein, an 18-year-old senior. "She's just the same Jasmine."

Trias appears reserved at times, even timid, but always offers a warm island smile, even when berated by judges.

"She really is that nice," said Andrea Bucci, an 18-year-old senior. "It's always you before her."

Jasmine Soriano Trias was born and raised in Hawaii, the oldest of Rudy and Nora Trias' three children. She lives in the central Oahu community of Mililani with her parents and her brother, 15-year-old Ronel, and sister, 6-year-old Neolani.

Trias says she's been singing since she could talk. She likes to surf and dance hula, and has talked of a career in nursing.

But friends say they know where her heart lies.

"a travesty."

Trias' fans—who seemingly include many of the 1.2 million people in her home state—remain steadfast. They brush aside criticism that she is inferior to the remaining contestants—Fantasia Barrino of High Point, N.C., and Diana DeGarmo of Snellville, Ga.—and say she'll return for next week's finale.

# Geena Davis gives birth to twin boys

**LOS ANGELES (AP)**—It's a boy—and a boy—for Oscar-winning actress Geena Davis. The 47-year-old star of "Thelma & Louise" gave birth to twin boys at a Los Angeles hospital, publicist Paul Bloch said Monday.

Kian William and Kaiis Steven, born May 6, are now at home in Los Angeles with their mother.

"Mother and babies are doing beautifully," Bloch said.

These are the second and third children for Davis and her surgeon

husband, Reza Jarrahy, 33. The couple, who married in September 2001, already have a 2-year-old daughter, Alizeh Keshvar.

"Alizeh was delighted to have two new baby brothers," Bloch said.

Davis won a supporting-actress Academy Award for playing the kooky dog trainer in 1988's "The Accidental Tourist" and received an Oscar nomination for best actress for 1991's "Thelma & Louise."

# Sylvester Stallone joins 'Contender' casting call

By FRAZIER MOORE  
AP TELEVISION WRITER

**NEW YORK (AP)**—Sylvester Stallone stepped into the ring Monday and, though wearing jeans and long-sleeve shirt, struck a blow for his upcoming TV series "The Contender."

The site was a lower Manhattan gym hosting five days of tryouts for aspiring pugilists who aim to be among the 16 contenders vying for the million-dollar purse on NBC's contest-drama.

Each hopeful filled out forms, was examined by a doctor, then waited to be paired off for three minutes of sparring under the watchful eye of Frank Stallone, the show's boxing consultant and the host's brother.

Meanwhile, the man who made "Rocky" a symbol of the American dream had a headlock on the attention of reporters and camera crews gathered for his appearance.

"The Contender, is not about boxing. It's about people who box—and that's a big difference," he said.

Maybe that's why "casting call" was the operative term: Not only was each tryout being assessed for his boxing ability, but also being interviewed to gauge his potential star appeal.

"We're looking for star power," said Mark Burnett, the series' executive producer and the creator of such hits as "Survivor" and "The Apprentice."

"To be a star, you've got to be a great boxer, but you've also got to have great charisma," he said. "What's wrong with boxing today? There are not enough great characters."

Burnett intends for his show to establish great characters in the boxing arena and bring them to a huge, new audience that, until now, was immune to boxing's charm: "Maybe we can kick-start a wonderful, noble sport."

New York is the eighth of 13 cities visited by the show's scouting party. The sweep will yield some 4,000 fighters, who then will be winnowed to 50

occupying a single, yet-to-be-determined weight class. After more callbacks, this number will be trimmed to 16.

The 16-episode series will track those finalists training and living together as they eliminate one another in the ring.

"This is a story of hopes and dreams," said Burnett, who called himself a lifelong boxing fan. "It really is the 'Rocky' journey."

An essential element of the series, added Stallone, is that the characters be "allowed to show, behind the scenes, their fears, their underbelly, their childlike insecurities—and prove they're human, so people see they're not beasts, not animals."

Listed as a "mentor" for the fighters is boxing champ Sugar Ray Leonard, who, also on hand Monday, playfully sparred with Stallone for the cameras.

NBC has announced "The Contender" will be a midseason entry on Tuesday nights—facing off its time slot against Fox's

biggest show, "American Idol."

But Fox hopes to beat NBC to the punch with its own boxing contest-drama—and, according to "The Contender's" producers, it's hitting below the belt by stealing their idea.

Announced last month, "The Next Great Champ" boasts a real-life Rocky, six-time World Champion Oscar De La Hoya, who will offer the series' champ a possible title fight and a boxing contract with his Golden Boy Promotions, as well as the cash prize.

This series, with no announced premiere date, has just concluded its own seven-city search, which will result in about a dozen finalists. It's being produced by Endemol USA, a heavyweight in the "reality" genre with such series as "Big Brother" and "Fear Factor."

Fox had no comment on any charges that it had stolen the "Contender" concept.

"It doesn't feel good to have such a similar show on the air," said Burnett. "But the way to defeat the competition is to do your best work. Just an idea isn't enough."

# Daughter can't bear the weight when mom unloads her burden

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

**DEAR ABBY:**

My mother calls me every day to complain about my sister, with whom she has always fought. She goes on and on about her financial problems and lashes out at me when she's upset with other people.

I am only 20. I'm a full-time college student, have a full-time job, and I am deeply involved in a relationship.

I am trying to understand my mother's problems, but lately every time I hang up the phone after talking with her, I cry.

I am young and trying to learn how to handle my own problems. I don't think I can handle hers, too. I have tried explaining to her how I feel, but she refuses to listen.

My sister says I should hang up on Mother when she calls to complain, but I don't want to do that.

I've asked Mom to talk to Dad about her problems. They have been married 30 years. She says she doesn't want to stress him out. She doesn't realize the stress she puts on me.

I know my problem is small compared to most people, but in a few more years I'll be facing the harsh realities of life: mortgage, kids and bills. How can I ask Mom not to call me with her many complaints?

STRESSED OUT BY MOM

**DEAR STRESSED OUT:** Your mother is using you like the valve on a pressure cooker. When her frustrations build up, she calls you to vent. I agree it would be better if she talked to your father about her problems, but you appear to be her dumping ground of choice.

Since you can't change her, you're going to have to change the way you react to her. Tell your father that you've reached your limit and it's time for him to intercede — or tune her out when she starts dumping.

□ □ □ □

**DEAR ABBY:** My husband, "Mark," and I had dinner at our friends "Brian" and "Stephanie's" a few weeks ago. Several other couples joined us. Stephanie served the most delicious meal and everyone begged her for the recipes. She said every single one had come from your cookbooklet set. Stephanie said she'd had it for ages and wasn't sure if the ordering information was correct. Would you please tell me how I can get a set, because she also said the recipes were easy to follow and simple to make. I own a lot of cookbooks, Abby, but I can never get enough like that.

LESLIE IN LOS ANGELES

**DEAR LESLIE:** I'm pleased your friends' party was a success. Over the years, many of those recipes were family favorites of ours. To order the set, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$10 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby — Cookbooklet Set, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

The booklets are full of delectable recipes from appetizers through desserts. All the ingredients are simple, and the directions are a cinch to follow. Bon appetit!

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at [www.DearAbby.com](http://www.DearAbby.com) or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.



*Dear Abby*





# Pastimes

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

STUMPED?

For answers to today's crossword, call 1-800-228-5955! \$0.99 per minute. Watch today's puzzle, 11:30 a.m. only. A King Features service. NYT.



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**Ziggy®**

**Calvin and Hobbes**

By Bill Waterson

**Garfield®**

By Jim Davis

**Adam@home**

By Bryan Basset

**The Duplex**

By Glenn McCoy

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY

Justin Jeffre, Sean Astin, Lesley Boone, Sally Jessy Raphael

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY:** Having a crusader attitude will make all the difference in the world this year. Be a little stubborn if you think you are right. Be diverse in all that you do and you will meet the demands being put on you and accomplish your goals. Your numbers are 2, 13, 17, 29, 31, 40

EUGENIA  
LAST

THE LAST WORD  
IN ASTROLOGY



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**ARIES** (March 21-April 19)

Push to make others aware of what you are doing and how you believe it will help everyone on some level. If you can sell your ideas to others, you will put yourself in a favorable position. □□□



**TAURUS** (April 20-May 20)

This is a perfect day to make some much-needed adjustments. Opportunities will manifest themselves in the most unusual places, so don't hesitate to talk about your dreams. □□□



**GEMINI** (May 21-June 20)

Keeping a secret will be of utmost importance today. By disclosing what you are up to, you could blow a deal or your cover. Work by yourself; question your motives. □□□



**CANCER** (June 21-July 22)

Do something creative today that can be used to benefit others. The more you do to help make reforms, the better. □□□□



**LEO** (July 23-Aug. 22)

You will be misled if you are too gregarious. Tone down and observe what others are doing. Advancement may be at stake. □□



**VIRGO** (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

You can find an ideal romantic partner if you get out and do things that interest you. Get involved in talks that will stimulate your mind and broaden your perspective about projects you want to pursue. □□□□□



**LIBRA** (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Prepare yourself well so that you can follow through with what's necessary as quickly as possible. Don't be lazy or waste time thinking about what you should be doing. □□□



**SCORPIO** (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Partnerships will be a little hard to handle if you don't take precautions and fully prepare. You can get on with your plans and get the praise you deserve. □□□



**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Your work ethics will pay off, so roll up your shirtsleeves and work alongside others for best results. Your team-player approach will put you in a leadership position. □□□



**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

You should be developing your ideas today. If you find someone particularly inspiring, spend time discussing your plans together. Love and romance will be on your doorstep. □□□□□



**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Take the initiative to follow what you feel is the best path and refrain from being led astray. Prepare to take a pass on what others are asking of you. □□



**PISCES** (Feb. 19-March 20)

Your involvement in good causes will be rewarded today. You will begin to see the results of a job well done. Someone unusual, but interesting, will want to get to know you better. □□□□

**BIRTHDAY BABY:** You are proactive and never take the conventional route. Your outgoing nature always leads to adventure and excitement. You will chase your dreams until you reach your destiny.

Check out Eugenia's Web sites at [astroadvice.com](http://astroadvice.com) and [eugenialast.com](http://eugenialast.com).



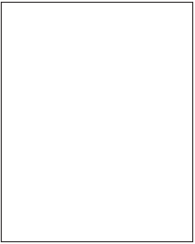










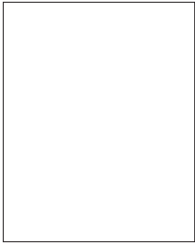


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Saipan Tribune

# Sports

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE